

Union Calendar No. 147

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 923

[Report No. 109-268]

To amend title 39, United States Code, to provide for free mailing privileges for personal correspondence and parcels sent by family members from within the United States to members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 17, 2005

Mr. FOSSELLA (for himself, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. PETRI, and Mr. KIND) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Government Reform

NOVEMBER 3, 2005

Additional sponsors: Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. GOODE, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. GORDON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MEEHAN, Mrs. DRAKE, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. OWENS, Mr. CASE, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. SPRATT, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. CARTER, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. PAUL, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. HULSHOF, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. WOLF, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. ISSA, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. EMANUEL, Ms. CARSON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. FARR, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. HART, Mr. OTTER, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MCCOTTER, Ms. BERKLEY, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. FOXX, Mr. WEXLER, Mr.

McHUGH, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. DENT, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. PLATTS, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. SIMPSON, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, Mr. WALSH, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. PORTER, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. HALL, Mr. FORD, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. BERRY, Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD, Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. KUHLMANN of New York, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee, and Mr. WEINER

NOVEMBER 3, 2005

Reported with amendments, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on February 17, 2005]

A BILL

To amend title 39, United States Code, to provide for free mailing privileges for personal correspondence and parcels sent by family members from within the United States to members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Supply Our Soldiers*
5 *Act of 2005”.*

6 **SEC. 2. POSTAL BENEFITS PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS OF THE**
7 **ARMED FORCES.**

8 *(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, in con-*
9 *sultation with the United States Postal Service, shall pro-*

1 *vide for a program under which postal benefits shall be pro-*
2 *vided to qualified individuals in accordance with suc-*
3 *ceeding provisions of this Act.*

4 (b) *QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL.*—*For purposes of this Act,*
5 *the term “qualified individual” means an individual who*
6 *is—*

7 (1) *a member of the Armed Forces of the United*
8 *States on active duty (as defined in section 101 of*
9 *title 10, United States Code); and*

10 (2)(A) *serving in Iraq or Afghanistan; or*

11 (B) *hospitalized at a facility under the jurisdic-*
12 *tion of the Armed Forces of the United States as a*
13 *result of a disease or injury incurred as a result of*
14 *service in Iraq or Afghanistan.*

15 (c) *POSTAL BENEFITS DESCRIBED.*—

16 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*The postal benefits provided*
17 *under this Act shall consist of such coupons or other*
18 *similar evidence of credit (whether in printed, elec-*
19 *tronic, or other format, and hereinafter in this Act re-*
20 *ferred to as “vouchers”) as the Secretary of Defense*
21 *(in consultation with the Postal Service) shall deter-*
22 *mine, entitling the bearer or user to make qualified*
23 *mailings free of postage.*

1 (2) *QUALIFIED MAILING.*—*For purposes of this*
2 *Act, the term “qualified mailing” means the mailing*
3 *of any mail matter which—*

4 *(A) is described in subparagraph (A), (B),*
5 *(C), or (D) of paragraph (3);*

6 *(B) is sent from within an area served by*
7 *a United States post office; and*

8 *(C) is addressed to a qualified individual.*

9 (3) *MAIL MATTER DESCRIBED.*—*The mail matter*
10 *described in this paragraph is—*

11 *(A) any letter mail not exceeding 13 ounces*
12 *in weight and having the character of personal*
13 *correspondence;*

14 *(B) any sound- or video-recorded commu-*
15 *nications not exceeding 15 pounds in weight and*
16 *having the character of personal correspondence;*

17 *(C) any ground parcel not exceeding 15*
18 *pounds in weight; and*

19 *(D) any bound printed matter not exceeding*
20 *15 pounds in weight.*

21 (4) *LIMITATIONS.*—

22 *(A) NUMBER.*—*An individual shall be eligi-*
23 *ble for 1 voucher for each month in which such*
24 *individual is a qualified individual.*

1 (B) *USE.*—Any such voucher may not be
2 used—

3 (i) for more than a single qualified
4 mailing; or

5 (ii) after the earlier of—

6 (I) the expiration date of such
7 voucher, as designated by the Secretary
8 of Defense; or

9 (II) the last day of the 1-year pe-
10 riod referred to in section 4.

11 (5) *COORDINATION RULE.*—Postal benefits under
12 this Act shall be in addition to, and not in lieu of,
13 any reduced rates of postage or other similar benefits
14 which might otherwise be available by or under law,
15 including any rates of postage resulting from the ap-
16 plication of section 3401(b) of title 39, United States
17 Code.

18 (d) *REGULATIONS.*—Not later than 30 days after the
19 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense
20 (in consultation with the Postal Service) shall prescribe any
21 regulations necessary to carry out this Act, including—

22 (1) procedures by which vouchers will be pro-
23 vided or made available (including measures to allow
24 vouchers to reach, in a timely manner, the persons se-

1 lected by qualified individuals to use the vouchers);
 2 and

3 (2) procedures to ensure that the number of
 4 vouchers provided or made available with respect to
 5 any qualified individual complies with subsection
 6 (c)(4)(A).

7 **SEC. 3. FUNDING.**

8 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—There is authorized to be appro-
 9 priated to the Department of Defense a sum determined by
 10 the Department of Defense to be equal to the expenses in-
 11 curred by the Department in providing the benefits de-
 12 scribed in section 2(c).

13 (b) *TRANSFERS TO POSTAL SERVICE.*—

14 (1) *BASED ON ESTIMATES.*—The Department of
 15 Defense shall transfer to the Postal Service, out of any
 16 amount so appropriated and in advance of each cal-
 17 endar quarter during which postal benefits under this
 18 Act may be used, an amount equal to the amount of
 19 postal benefits that the Department of Defense esti-
 20 mates will be used during such quarter, reduced or
 21 increased (as the case may be) by any amounts by
 22 which the Department finds that a determination
 23 under this Act for a prior quarter was greater than
 24 or less than the amount finally determined for such
 25 quarter.

1 (2) *BASED ON FINAL DETERMINATION.*—A final
 2 determination of the amount necessary to correct any
 3 previous determination under this section, and any
 4 transfer of amounts between the Postal Service and
 5 the Department of Defense based on that final deter-
 6 mination, shall be made not later than 6 months after
 7 the end of the 1-year period referred to in section 4.

8 (c) *CONSULTATION REQUIRED.*—All estimates and de-
 9 terminations under this section of the amount of postal ben-
 10 efits under this Act used in any period shall be made by
 11 the Department of Defense in consultation with the Postal
 12 Service.

13 **SEC. 4. DURATION.**

14 *The postal benefits under this Act shall apply with re-*
 15 *spect to mail matter sent during the 1-year period begin-*
 16 *ning on the date on which the regulations under section*
 17 *2(d) take effect.*

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to provide for free mailing privileges for personal correspondence and certain other mail matter sent from within the United States to members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan.”.

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